



Surveillance of summer mortality and preparedness to reduce the health impact of heat waves in Italy

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Abstract:

Since 2004, the Italian Department for Civil Protection and the Ministry of Health have implemented a national program for the prevention of heat-health effects during summer, which to-date includes 34 major cities and 93% of the residents aged 65 years and over. The Italian program represents an important example of an integrated approach to prevent the impact of heat on health, comprising Heat Health Watch Warning Systems, a mortality surveillance system and prevention activities targeted to susceptible subgroups. City-specific warning systems are based on the relationship between temperature and mortality and serve as basis for the modulation of prevention measures. Local prevention activities, based on the guidelines defined by the Ministry of Health, are constructed around the infrastructures and services available. A key component of the prevention program is the identification of susceptible individuals and the active surveillance by General Practitioners, medical personnel and social workers. The mortality surveillance system enables the timely estimation of the impact of heat, and heat waves, on mortality during summer as well as to the evaluation of warning systems and prevention programs. Considering future predictions of climate change, the implementation of effective prevention programs, targeted to high risk subjects, become a priority in the public health agenda.

Source: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2898048>

Resource Description

Early Warning System:

resource focus on systems used to warn populations of high temperatures, extreme weather, or other elements of climate change to prevent harm to health

A focus of content

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Temperature

Temperature: Extreme Heat

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Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

Non-United States

Non-United States: Europe

European Region/Country: European Country

Other European Country : Italy

Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Morbidity/Mortality

Intervention:

strategy to prepare for or reduce the impact of climate change on health

A focus of content

Mitigation/Adaptation:

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

Model/Methodology:

type of model used or methodology development is a focus of resource

Exposure Change Prediction, Outcome Change Prediction

Population of Concern: A focus of content

Population of Concern:

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Elderly, Low Socioeconomic Status

Other Vulnerable Population: adults with chronic diseases, pre-existing conditions; those who live alone

Resource Type:

format or standard characteristic of resource

Policy/Opinion, Research Article

Resilience:

capacity of an individual, community, or institution to dynamically and effectively respond or adapt to

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shifting climate impact circumstances while continuing to function

A focus of content

Timescale:

time period studied

Short-Term (

Vulnerability/Impact Assessment:

resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content